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Thesis

THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF CERTAIN ROMANS

by

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PART I.

Chapter I.

Introduction--Scope of the Theme.

Far back in the years of dim antiquity there wandered about from city to city an aged poet of Ionia, a blind minstrel, inspired, so tradition says,--who sang his immortal verses to eager listeners throughout the land of Hellas. Graceful, simple and interesting were his songs, and unrivalled his two great Hellenic epics, the Iliad and the Odyssey.

In the terse and direct phrases of these poems we find our most vivid pictures of the people of those far off Homeric days,--their warfare and their peace,--their hunting and their agricultural pursuits. To them we turn for the story of the Homeric home life, the occupations of the people, and their simple conceptions of religion and the life hereafter.

In later Greek and Roman literature we find, repeatedly recurring, certain threads of religious thought, and, retracing these through the earlier centuries, we find their beginnings in the poems of the aged Ionic bard.

In the eleventh book of the Odyssey we hear the voice of the poet, sounding, from the far off ages, for the first time in history, the story of a mortal's descent into Hades. (1)

(1)--Odyssey, Book 11, lines 600 ff.

from Roman Vergil we hear a story based on the same theme, but written a thousand years later, and incorporating what Homer's story could not have,--a thousand years of mystic revelation, ritual worship, and Greek philosophy.

A cultured Roman who lived in the days of Cicero, Lucretius and Vergil inherited these rich stores of religious experience, and inevitably, he reflected them in his conception of the soul's life in the world here, and hereafter.

The text of Vergil's great Roman Epic is shot through and through with these threads of thought--the Aeneid, called the greatest single religious document of antiquity. (1) Many lines of Roman Lucretius' immortal verse reflects the wisdom of his beloved Greek Master, Epicurus, and the orations and letters of Cicero echo the thought not only of Epicurean and of Stoic, but of the Pythagorean as well--that mystic philosophy which first (2) brought to the western world the belief in the dual personality of soul and body, the separation of the spiritual from the material, and the immortality of the soul.

In the lives of any nation's great men we read that nation's history, and in the same manner, we see the trend of any people, in morals, religion and philosophy, reflected in the religion and philosophy of their great writers and thinkers.

In order to write about the particular religious experience of certain Romans, we must set those experiences against a background of the general religious experience of the universal Roman people. In turn this trend of religious thought is linked in-

(1)--"Pagan Ideas of Immortality"--C. H. Moore--Page 2.

(2)-- " " " " " " Pages 50, 51, and 59.

separably with the history of the nation, the gain and loss of wealth, the ebb and flow of fortunes, the rise and fall of moral tone. The incoming, by hundreds of thousands, of people whose birth was foreign and whose beliefs were strange and fantastic, must perforce have cast its shadow on the religious beliefs and moral life of the Roman people.

Thus it becomes evident that our theme of individual religious experience is interwoven with the universal history of the Roman people. Into our story of Rome's religious history we must write a great deal of her material history. And since Rome looked to Greece in so many ways,--and especially in literature and philosophy, we must include a brief account of the growth of religious thought in Greece during the thousand years which intervened between Homer and Vergil.

One does not read understandingly about the religious thought of Cicero's day unless he knows the story of religious revelation and thought which preceded that day. This is the story which we must tell,--the story of human religious revelation as it is depicted in Greek and Roman history, and in the religious experience of certain outstanding Romans.

It is a fascinating subject--the gradual unfolding of man's spiritual outlook, from the colorless and gloomy traditions of the early Greeks up to and beyond the days of the later Roman Republic, when the note of hope was sounded that prepared the world for Christianity.

Chapter II.

Homeric Religion.

Pathetically barren and meager are the Homeric ideas of religion and the hereafter, as those ideas are expressed in the eleventh book of the Odyssey. The Ionic poet sings of the hero Odysseus who, after making his way to the dim "Groves of Proserpine", dug a trench, and, as Circe had directed, poured a libation of wine and water, and sprinkled barley meal. Then the "deathless heads", after drinking the blood of the sheep, gained life enough to speak to Odysseus. (1)

Gloomy and colorless is the conception of the Homeric hereafter which we glean from the lines which follow. Achilles' famous and much-quoted words have aptly pictured for us that conception. "Better to be a laborer on earth, and serve for hire some man of m an estate, than reign o'er all who have gone down to death." (2)

The shades of the dead are shown in bodily form dwelling in a murky shadowy region, vaguely situated at the western edge of the world. Here they lead a feeble, chimerical existence, with no prospect of either punishment or reward. (3)

The dead, according to the Homeric idea, have no share in the world above, no power to help or harm the living,--(4)--no intercourse with them exception through such miraculous visits as that of Odysseus.

Near the close of the eleventh book of the Odyssey, how-

(1)--Odyssey, Book 11, lines 30-54.

(2)--Odyssey, Book 11, lines 602-606.

(3)--Odyssey, Book 11, lines 46-52.

(4)--Odyssey, Book 11, lines 252-271.

ever, the poem assumes an entirely different thought and language, as if Homer were looking forward through the centuries to come, and anticipating the tremendous changes impending in the religious and philosophical ideas of mankind,- ideas which reached their culmination in the age of Lucretius and Vergil,- that eventful final century of the Roman Republic, a century so significant for Christianity.

Homer, near the end of his account of Odysseus' descent, suggests what was to be a powerful and lasting religious conception,- the idea of punishment and reward, of moral relation between life on earth, and the hereafter."And next", he says, "I saw the huge Orion drive, across the meadows green with asphodel, the savage beast whom he has slain".(1)

Here the poem assumes an entirely different thought and tone, and suggestions are here which point to beliefs prominent in the religious and philosophical writings of later (2) Greeks and Romans. From this point we have action and vitality,- Minos passing judgement, (3) various sinners suffering retribution, (4) Orion hunting, as on earth.(1)

Finally, we have that scene, unequalled in story, of Heracles, girt and ready for new struggles, as on earth, and, (what is, for our purpose, most significant,) enjoying special privileges as a reward for his virtues. This is the first suggestion in Homer, of a moral connection between this life and the hereafter. This gives us a picture much more satisfying, and vital, and a truly religious note is sounded for the first

(1)-- Odyssey, Book 11, line712, ff.

(2)- Aen.VI,580-624.
(3)- Od. 11, lines707-711.
(4)- Od. 11, lines716-747.

time in Greek literature.

The religious experience of Vergil is typified by his lines on a similar theme, but the picture he draws is made nearly a thousand years later,- a thousand years of conflict, doubt, and superstition; yet, through all sounds of conflict the voice of philosophy sounding a note of hope ever clearer. Through all the doubt and superstition the glimmering light of soul consciousness shone,ever brighter, until all found expression in the sixth book of Vergil's Aenid, called, we said, the greatest single religious document of antiquity, and one which looked forward , with true prophetic vision, to Christianity.(See P.40,note 1)

Vergil collected all that was best from the religious tradition of the ages gone before. He added to this, new elements of spiritual hope. "For those who have read Vergil", writes St. Beuve, "There is nothing astonishing in Christianity". (1)

We find, diffused throughout early Greek and Roman beliefs about the future life, three different conceptions. The most elementary of these was the notion of the spirit-in- the- tomb. Rome developed this conception to its highest degree, and the Romans, of themselves, never went beyond this elementary belief. Other conceptions developed in Rome, but they were imported from foreign countries. To the Roman the spirit had a definite local habitation in the tomb, and in the earth above the tomb.

(1)The Religious Experience of the Roman People,- by W.W.Fowler,-Page 403.

Homer suggested the spirit- in- the- tomb idea of the hereafter when he had his hero offer wine, water and meal at the trench.Later, however, as we have shown, Homer developed this idea into a suggestion of something with much higher spiritual significance.

Vergil repeatedly refers to the same early religious idea, as for example, when he pictured Andromache at the cenotaph of Hector. "Andromache Manisque vocabat Hectoreum ad tumulum". (1)

The second theory of the hereafter was that of the shade with bodily form, dwelling for eternity in Hades. This is the notion that prevails throughout most of the Odyssey. Homer was the first one to give expression to this idea, although he also suggested the other two theories.

The third and highest conception of the future life is that of the dead personality suffering punishment or receiving reward. There is here a moral connection between this life and the next, which Homer anticipates when he describes Heracles,who"sits himself among the deathless gods, well pleased to share their feasts, and Hebe,--his wife",(2)

Vergil presents the same theory in the sixth Aeneid.Here Vergil expressed the epitome of the ancient vision of the life to come. Aptly has it been written that Vergil's religious experience, which the Aeneid reflects, is the "result of many intertwisted strands, the other ends of which run far

(1) Aeneid, Book III, lines 303-304.

(2) Odyssey, Book 11, 748-753.

back into the early stages of Greek thought" (1) The same may be said of the religious experience of Lucretius, and of Cicero, as we learn that experience from the writings of these outstanding Romans.

To unravel these "intertwisted strands" is our next task - these various threads of popular legend, visions of mysteries, imageries of minstrels,- woven,by the wonderful resources at the command of these great writers, into new and harmonious patterns, with a new and higher moral color.

(1)-"The Development of Vergil's Art," by W.H.Prescott, Page 247.

Chapter III.

The Growth of Religious Thought in Greece.

Since Rome's best spiritual ideas were largely of Grecian origin, we must trace the development of religious thought in Greece before we can fully understand the religious experience of Rome.

We have found, in Homer's poems, certain beginnings of religious doctrines which were later prominent in the spiritual ideas of Greece and Rome. We have seen that practically all hope for man rested in his life on this earth, and that that there was very little connection between religion and morality.

Tracing the further religious development in early Greece, we have, after Homer, the writings of Hesiod. This writer lived in the seventh century, B.C., and he was the first to write about the work and fortunes of the common

man. Justice, and the social relations, were his themes. Hesiod shows no advance over Homer in his ideas of the hereafter, but he shows a decided change, in that men are represented not in groups or nations, as in the Homeric poems, but rather as individuals. Man has become more conscious of his own personality,- more reflective.

In the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. there came about in Greece, great economic and political changes, marked by rapid development of commerce, industry, and political machinery. Colonies were established, and with travel came mental expansion and sense of personal power. The individual consciousness, which Hesiod first emphasized, was further awakened. With wealth and leisure came larger opportunities for reflection, and thus there arose in Greece a period of strong individualism.

Later, in Rome, this movement found its fullest expression in Lucretius' Epicureanism, in Cicero's Pythagoreanism, and finally, in the acceptance of the doctrines of Christianity.

On the tide of this new individualism of the seventh and sixth centuries, therecame an awakened longing for future happiness, for something more than the Homeric conception of a powerless world of shadows, which, for them, merely emphasized the bitterness and sadness of the life on earth. In answer to this call there arose in ancient Greece various mystical beliefs, the most significant of which was Orphism.

The Orphic cult appeared in Greece in the sixth century B. C. Where it originated we do not know, but its chief center seems to (1) have been in Southern Italy, before it was introduced into Athens, about 550 B. C. After that Athens became the literary center for the diffusion of Orphic doctrines. Pythagoreanism, which was popular in Rome in the last century of the republic, shared the Orphic beliefs and practices.

These doctrines had most vital influences in the history of ancient religion in both Greece and Rome. The Orphic ritual shifted man's outlook from this world to the next, and made two great contributions to religion,--it introduced belief in immortality, and belief in personal holiness. True Orphism demanded not only ceremonial purity, but purity of life,--hence we have a bond between religion and morality. The Orphic sect started the tendency toward self-denial and asceticism, so sharply emphasized by Christianity a thousand years later.

For our present study Orphism is particularly vital, for this belief, with its popular theories of immortality, of Tartarus and Elysium, of penalties, purifications, and transmigration, is reflected in the religious experience of both Cicero and Vergil. The sixth Aeneid is full of Orphic theories, and Vergil was, we may believe, working under Orphic influence when he wrote his much-disputed line, "Quisque suos patimur Manes." (Each individual of us must endure his own individual ghosthood.) (2)

(1)--See page 10A.

(2)--Aeneid, Book VI, Line 743.

References for Page 10, first paragraph. (Orphism and Pythagoreanism.)

"The Religious Thought of the Greeks."- C.H.Moore- Page 57; also Page 60.

"Psyche"- Rhode- Pages 336-337.

Cicero, Tusc. Disp. I,38. (concerning Pythagoras)

"Tenuit magnam illam Graeciam cum honore disciplinae, tum etiam auctoritate, multaque saecula post sic viguit Pythagoreorum nomen, ut nulli alii docti viderentur."

Diogenes Laertius, "Pythagoras", 3.

This ancient writer tells us that Pythagoras, when a young man, was devoted to learning. He traveled extensively, in Egypt and Crete especially, and then came to Southern Italy and Croton. He taught the Oriental mysteries, gave laws to the Italians, and gained a high reputation. He had three hundred scholars.

Reference for Page 11, first paragraph.

This Orphic quotation is found in Fragment 154, Abel.

An Orphic fragment reads,"The righteous beneath the rays of the sun have a gentler lot in fair meads by gently flowing Acheron, but they who have worked wrong under the rays of the sun, are lead down beneath Cocytus' watery plain into chill Tartarus." (1) (See ref. on P.10A.)

The Orphic belief in the divine nature of the human soul seems to have been based, not on a definite philosophical theory, but rather on faith and intuition, and a deep consciousness of man's dual nature. "The Orphics", writes C.H.Moore, "Were the first, so far as we know, to make the divinity of the soul a motive for religious life, and perhaps the first to see that if the soul is divine, it may naturally be regarded as eternally so, and, therefore, immortal." And he rightly adds,"These were momentous thoughts." (2)

In this doctrine of the dualism of body and soul, the soul ever gains in valus, while the body loses, and death is but the beginning of real life. Thus we see how far men had advanced in religious belief by the sixth century B.C., for this theory is the exact reversal of the Homeric idea.

We have said that the Orphic belief in the divinity of the soul rested largely on faith and intuition. It remained for Plato in the early fourth century B.C. to give to this more or less emotional doctrine a philosophical setting, and to transform it into a reasonable basis for re-

(1)- Pagan Ideas of Immortality, by C.H.Moore, Page 12.

(2)- Pagan Ideas of Immortality, by C.H.Moore, Page 14.

ligion. In Plato's philosophy, Greek literature found its supreme culminating point. What came after him was never higher, if, indeed, as high.

Plato maintained that behind this transient world lies another,- the world of ideas, invisible, but permanent, and (1) real,- a world which only the reason can grasp. Hence, man's reasoning soul must be of the world above the senses, and since ideas are eternal and immortal, the soul must be eternal and immortal. Plato could not conceive of a soul separated from life.

His theories were of transcendent importance in establishing the immortality of the soul, and were repeated through the centuries down to the Christian Era. His were the final words of pagan philosophy, and even down to our own day little has been added to advance Plato's ideas of immortality.

It is easy to see in these various doctrines which are reflected later in Roman beliefs, ever broadening paths that lead inevitably to Christianity. The vision of the future world ever increased and kept pace with a growing vision of morality and philosophy. It was through Plato that the spirit and wisdom of his master Socrates came forth to Hellas and to the world. At the close of Plato's "Phaedrus," Socrates offers this beautiful prayer, "Beloved Pan, and all ye other gods who haunt this place--grant me beauty of the inward soul, and make the outward and the inward man to be but one." It seems strange that the man who uttered such a prayer could have been accused of corrupting the youth of Athens!

(1) See Page 12A.

Reference for Page 12. (Plato)

In his "Republic", VI- 508ff, Plato sets forth his theory of the "world of ideas."

"These permanent ideas are of various grades and degrees, the supreme idea being that of the Good and the Beautiful, which is the cause of all existence, truth and knowledge;it at once comprehends these things within itself and is superior to them; it is the Absolute,God."

Plato develops his Doctrine of Ideas also in the following writings,- "Phaedo", 72ff, 86, 105; in the "Phaedrus," 245; in the "Republic" especially; in the "Meno", 81ff; and in the "Symposium".

Cicero repeats Plato's ideas in the Tusc. Disp. Bk I.

References for Page 13, (Influence of the mystical rites.)

Pindar, Fragment 137.

Early in the fifth century B.C. Pindar wrote of these mystical ceremonies,- "Happy he who has seen these things, and then goes beneath the earth, for he knows the end of life and its Zeus-given beginnings".

Sophocles, Fragment 753.

Sophocles wrote "Thrice blessed are they who have seen these rites, and then go to the house of Hades, for they also have life there, but all others have only woe."

Isocrates, an Athenian orator, said of the Eleusinian Mysteries, "Those who have shared this initiation possess sweeter hopes about death and about the whole of life."

Much that in Plato was in fusion became crystallized in Aristotle, and after that, religion, for thoughtful men, could no longer be divorced from an elevated morality.

Meanwhile, through these same centuries, another manifestation of Greek mystery religion was developing a wide influence in many respects parallel with that of Orphism. The moral and religious influence of the Eleusinian mysteries on Greek life and thought was inestimable. The ritual was emotional and dramatic it is true, rather than intellectual, and it made for splendid religious spectacles, but we must take into account the moral and religious doctrines of which these were the outer symbols.

High authorities of pagan antiquity, great men whose gravity and depth of mind cannot be questioned, bear witness with one accord to the elevating influence of the true Eleusinian mysteries. Such writers as Sophocles, Plato, Plutarch, Marcus (1) Aurelius, and others, attest to the wonderful effect the mysteries had on the religious emotions, and the high hope of the hereafter which they inspired. They were celebrated for five hundred years after Greece became a Roman province, and they did not finally perish until the destruction of Eleusis by Alaric the Goth in 396 A. D. (2)

It is of course fortunate that the mysteries did not gain complete mastery over the minds of the Greeks. A people completely under the sway of the mysteries would have been rendered unfit to work out clearly the problems of government, society, art and science which the Greeks were called on to solve. Yet we must give credit to the mysteries in that they

(1)--See Page 12A.

(2)--See Page 13A.

References for Page 13, Par. 2, (The destruction of Eleusis)

Harper- Dictionary of Classical Antiquities- Page 585- "The Eleusinian Mysteries lasted more than 500 years after Greece became a Roman province. They were esteemed by the Neo-Platonic philosophers as late as the time of the Emperor Julian. The Mithraic worship blended with the Eleusinian, but the Mysteries did not finally perish until the destruction of Eleusis by Alaric in his invasion of Greece in 396A.D."

C.H.Moore accepts the above statement in regard to Alaric and quotes it on Page 33 of his essay "Pagan Ideas of Immortality."

Botsford, "Ancient History?" Page 531,- "After Julian, under Theodosius, (Emperor 379-395 A.D.) Christianity came into its own. Those strongholds of the old Paganism, the Delphic oracle, the Olympian games, and the Eleusinian Mysteries, were abolished."

Eunapios, a Greek writer, says that Eleusis was cruelly plundered under Alaric- 396 A.D.- but neither Eunapios nor any other well- known author states formally that the Temple was destroyed at the time of this invasion. Zosmos, on the other hand, relates that Alaric, frightened by the apparition of phantoms, did nothing more than march across Attica. Finally, we know for certain that the celebration of the mysteries ceased under Theodosius II, 395 A.D. We believe that the Temple was destroyed later on, and that the work of devastation was begun by earthquakes and not by the hand of man." (From "Eleusis",- translated from the French of Demetrios Philios by Hamilton Galliff- Page 7.)

counteracted the barrenness of the early religion and awakened in the souls of men a sense of good and evil, a more elevated conception of a future life, and hope of immortality.

Chapter IV.

The Growth of Religious Thought in Rome.

Our story of Roman religion is, to some extent, the same as that of Greece, since Rome's spiritual ideas were so largely of Grecian origin. Yet Rome was too essentially different from Greece to duplicate exactly the Hellenic religion. In the imported Grecian literature and sculpture typical Roman traits gradually appeared, and the same native characteristics were stamped on Hellenic religion after it came to Rome.

As the very name of Greece suggests intellectual and artistic interests, imagination, and breadth of culture, so the name of Rome has become synonymous for the sterner qualities,--practicality, thoroughness, dignity, loyalty, and lack of imagination.

For one interested in the history of religion in general, an unusual system like that of Rome, with character so marked, must be itself a fascinating subject. In far antiquity it must have expressed accurately the needs and aspirations of the Roman people. How it became formalized is an interesting story,--how they discovered that it was inadequate--how they grafted on to it, and substituted for it, foreign rights and beliefs.

Roman religion, like everything else Roman, is a highly

technical subject. It is hard to realize the better side of the religion of a people so hard and practical, but we should try to give the Romans credit for their religiousness. In many modern books only the worst side is presented to us. One must be very familiar with Roman literature and antiquities to realize the residuum of spirituality in the Roman character beneath all its hardness and utilitarianism. One of the best ways to learn the true spirituality of Roman religion is to study continually the Aeneid, whose hero is the ideal Roman, "pius" in the best and widest sense.

It is hard to realize that the native Roman religion was something more than a kind of insurance system against all sorts of material evils, and that their religion was to them something higher than the mere idea of give and take. As the family, with its consecration to religion, grew and formed gentes, curiae, and the state, the veneration of the Roman for his state became his religion; it was, to him, a contract between the state and the gods. Since it embodied many of the elements of our patriotism, it became an elevating and ennobling influence. We see then, why Vergil, writing the Aeneid for the purpose of exalting the Roman state, made it a poem of religion as well.

All important religious offices were held in Rome by the state magistrates. This custom later prevented the state from falling into the hands of the priests, as often happened in the Orient.

Again, when Christianity appeared in Rome, we must realize

that it was completely misunderstood by the Romans, who could not separate the idea of religion from veneration of the state. The Roman had no objection to Christianity as a religion, but he had no comprehension of a sect that refused obeisance to state and emperor. His antagonism was based purely on political grounds. To him a Christian was merely a bad citizen. All this, because, to a Roman, the Roman state was his religion. Thus the early Roman religion developed into something quite different from the parallel early belief among the Greeks. The incorporation of the Roman religion with the Roman state has for our purpose, a further importance. In spite of the later developement of foreign cults in Rome, this Roman religious conception persisted in outer form at least, down to the close of the Republican era.

The incorporation of religion with the state is reflected continually in the religious writings of Cicero and Vergil.

Scanning in outline the story of Roman religion, we may trace five different currents which united in the later years of the Republic and found their expression in the writings of Lucretius, Cicero and Vergil. These are, (1) the early worship of Numina, (2) the Etruscan ritual, (3) the Greek cults and Greek philosophy, (4) the Oriental cults and (5) the deification of the Roman Emperors.

In spite of the persistance of early rites and traditions, religion was never, to the Roman, an exclusive thing. He was very hospitable to foreign cults, grafting them without distinction upon his own. Many Romans indeed, practised more than one cult. How indiscriminate his hospitality was, we realize

when we read on an altar on the Palatine, an inscription, "to the Unknown God or Goddess"--("Sei deiuo sei deivae sacrom.") They had heard that there was one deity which they had left out and in order to be sure that Rome might share the favors of that deity, the senate voted an altar with that inscription.

This religious receptiveness went hand in hand with the utter lack of individual consciousness in the early religion,--the lack of reflection on future life,--the emphasis on material blessings of this world,--and the essential truth that to a Roman his real religion was the Roman State.

The Etruscan influence, which we named as the second in Roman religion, came to Rome, naturally enough, before that of the Greeks. These northern neighbors taught the Romans, among many other things, to build temples to the gods, and to interpret omens. By far the most curious feature of Etruscan religious life was their elaborate system of divination, which was taught to them probably by the Babylonians.

This system was studied, and, in part, adopted by the Roman augurs and lasted throughout the period of the Roman Empire. "It was in close relation to the events and needs of human life," says Warde Fowler, "but may fairly be described as the most remarkable waste of human ingenuity known to history." (1) The Etruscan religion brought to Rome few vital or forwarding principles, aside from the idea of sacrifice as part of religious ceremonies.

(1) W. W. Fowler, (in Sandys' "Companion to Latin Studies.")--Page 167.

The Hellenic influence first came to Rome and Italy about the middle ofthe eighth century B.C. when the Greeks began to colonize Sicily and Southern Italy. From that period the religious life and thought of Greece gradually overlaid that of Rome until the origin could not be traced,even by the Romans.

In 272 B.C. Livius Andronicus translated the Odyssey into Latin, and this was the beginning of Latin Literature. By the end of the third century Rome was producing epic poetry and from that period,- the age of Naevius and Ennius- to the time of Vergil, and on through centuries of the Christian Era, every Latin author used Greek models for his work in both oratory and poetry.

The keepers of the Sybilline Books, in 217B.C., decreed that there should be shown a representation of the twelve Greek deities enjoying a banquet with the Roman people. This official reception of the Greek gods meant that the subjugation of Rome by Hellas was virtually complete.

The story of religious development in Greece we have already told. It is certain that when this influence came to Rome, it brought higher and better religious ideas than Rome by herself could have conceived. The most potent source of such higher influence lay in Greek philosophy, and its appeal was a natural one to the practical Roman of the more reflective type.

The discussion of the Greek philosophies is reserved for a later chapter. They influenced particularly the intellectual classes in Rome, and since the men of such classes produced the Latin literature of that period, we have con-

siderable evidence of the effect of the Greek philosophies on the Roman mind. The writings of Cicero, Vergil, and Lucretius furnish us with especially good evidence of this influence, and for our subject, which is concerned with the religious experience of these men, such evidence is particularly to the point.

The mystery religions reached Rome after the beginning of the third century B.C. These were cults in which all classes of citizens could share, and they offered, moreover, a certain aesthetic satisfaction.

Ever since the end of the regal period there had been a tendency in Roman religious experience to despise the old religious forms, and to receive new and more emotional forms. Gradually in Rome there had been developing, among some classes, a sense of rebellion against the extreme formalism,- the coldness and aloofness of the Roman state religion.

As a result, many turned with relief to the mystic ritual, with its belief in a future life, and its need of individual purification and discipline to be practised in preparation for that life beyond. By the ignorant follower the emphasis was often wrongly placed on portents, superstitions, and orgies , and degraded, in the eyes of the world, the religion which they professed. But this has ever been true in all doctrines, and we need not dwell on such phases. The survival of only that which is fittest and best is one of the happiest truths in history and in life. After the various reactions of circumstances and of years we have left a

residue of pure gold. This is true of religion as well as literature.The Aeneid survives as an example of the the best in literature. The religion that survives in the Aeneid is the best, so far as antiquity knew the best. We need not, then, dwell very long on any religion that was less than enlightening, and ennobling. The truly reflective Roman found a true elevating influence in the higher doctrines of the mysteries.

The Oriental influence we named as the fourth which had a marked effect on the religious experience of the Romans who lived in the later years of the republic. Of the Oriental cults which came to Rome, Mithrys, Isis, and Cybele were the outstanding deities. In 204B.C. the Roman senate, following the advice of the Sybilline Books, brought from Phrygia the fetish stone of Cybele, the Great Mother of the Gods. By Cybele, it was said, Hannibal and his invading army could be forced out of Italy.(2)

The arrival of the "Magna Mater" of the Phrygians is called by Fowler "at once one of the most picturesque and one of the saddest sights in the history of Rome.For the decay of the native Roman religion marked the decay of the Roman city-state, and in the two centuries that followed the struggle with Hannibal, Rome gained the world, and lost her own soul."(1)

Vergil makes mention of the "Magna Mater", and she was in general highly honored, (See P. 20A) for Hannibal did withdraw from Italy, but her worship was not greatly developed until near the end of the Republican Era.

(1)- W.W.Fowler, in "Sandys' Companion to Latin Studies"-P.173.

(2)- Livy,Book 27, Chapter 51.

References for Page 20, last par. (Magna Mater.)

Aeneid III, lines 111-113. (Anchises speaks of Crete.)

"Hinc Mater cultrix Cybelae Corybantiaque aera
Idaeumque nemus, hinc fida silentia sacris
et iuncti currum dominae subiere leones,-

Aeneid VI, 784-787.

"-Felix prole virum; qualis Berecyntia mater
invehitur curru Phrygias turrita per urbes,
laeta deum partu, centum complexa nepotes,
omnes caelicolas, omnis supera alta tenentis."

Addition to Page 21, Par. 3. "Why the Romans accepted Augustus as 'Princeps').

It is probably that Augustus felt that Augustus stood for something safe and dependable,--for the old order, at least in appearance. He was conservative and they trusted him. Without doubt his personal influence explains to some extent their acceptance of him.

Addition to Page 21, Par. 3. (The deification of Emperors.)

Julius Caesar had suggested this practice before his death, thinking, no doubt, that the people accustomed to democratic institutions would endure better an autocratic form of government if it were associated in their minds with a religious idea. Rome was flooded with Orientals who were accustomed to this idea. Augustus at first rejected Caesar's idea, but later, whether because he was yielding to the influx of Oriental ideas, or whether because he saw in this worship a means of strengthening the State,--accepted it. He allowed the use of his name in connection with the Goddess Roma in the East. After his death the Senate recognised him as "Divus." For the people such worship furthered a religious purpose, it furnished an appeal to the emotions, and gave them for worship a personality connected with the state.

As the last of the five phases contributing to the religious story of Rome, we must mention the deification of the emperors. This worship was instituted by Augustus, and was considerably stressed by Vergil in his writings.

Roman society was fast losing its morals, and forgetting its religious traditions, and yet there was an increasing world-wide spirit of longing and unrest. Men felt the world (1) crumbling beneath their feet. They felt an appalling realization that the structure of the state was ready to collapse. They sensed a separation from the Supreme Power of the universe, and this sense of destitution made them welcome Augustus as "Princeps", in 31B.C. and made them glad to do his bidding. (See Page 20 A, last two paragraphs.)

Augustus secured from the senate an act deifying Julius Caesar, and there followed the deification of a long line of emperors. Augustus brought about a marvellous restoration of the traditional faith, and produced an era of prosperity and progress which enabled Rome to gather her failing resources, and continue her supremacy for five hundred years longer. Vergil, in his constant praise of Augustus, was but reflecting the true patriotism of a grateful people. (See Page 20A.)

This is, in brief, the story of the various currents of spiritual thought and religious doctrines which found their source in Homeric days,- took their course along a thousand years of antiquity, meeting other currents and cross-currents, and finally found a worthy expression in the writings of the last century of the republic,- in Cicero's Orations, in Vergil's Sixth Aeneid, and in Lucretius' powerful "De Natura".

(1) In the last days, it may well be believed that men felt the need of a Mediator, to lessen their sense of distance and estrangement from God,"a daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both." (Job Ix, 33)

PART II.

Chapter I.

History of Rome During the Last Century of the Republic.

It is impossible to think of Roman religion as separate from Roman history. The religion is an integral part of the life and growth of the people. Knowledge of Roman history is the only scientific basis for the study of Roman religion. The facts of Roman life, public and private, are closely bound. We cannot comprehend the great story of the rise and decay of Roman dominion without following out the religious history of the Romans.

Until the last century B. C. the history of Rome was the history of great achievements by men who were themselves not great. A few individuals such as the two Scipios and Cato the Censor could be classed as great, but with these few exceptions, the generals and statesmen who made Rome famous are scarcely more than names to us.

After 133 B. C. however, comes an epoch crowded with interesting personalities, and in the story of their lives we read the decline and fall of the Roman Republic. We find here such names as, the Gracchi, Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Crassus, Caesar, Cato and Cicero.

The year 31 B. C. and the accession of Octavian to supreme power brought the most famous period in Roman history to a close. It was a period of storm and stress, and a time when the foreign and domestic affairs of Rome present alike an absorbing interest.

Externally it was a question of whether the great dominion built up around the Mediterranean should survive intact or be parceled out, in the West among the barbarians, in the East among Oriental monarchs. From the latter fate the arms of Marius and Caesar, Sulla and Pompey, wrought deliverance.

Internally it was a question whether republican institutions should endure or be merged into the broader stabler fabric of imperial rule. The one-man power established by Julius Caesar and afterwards confirmed and strengthened by Octavian, furnished the answer to the second question.

The republic indeed was doomed. One hundred years of dissension and civil warfare proclaimed clearly enough the failure of the old order. Rome was a city-state suddenly called to the responsibilities of universal rule. Both the machinery of her government and the morals of her people were inadequate for so huge a task.

The gradual revolution which changed the Roman city-state into imperial Rome, judged by its results, is perhaps the most momentous movement in the annals of mankind. Let us briefly summarize this movement.

At the opening of this period (133 B. C.) we find Roman society corrupted and enfeebled as a result of foreign conquests. Supreme power more and more tended to settle in the hands of a narrow Oligarchy--the senatorial nobility. Its dishonesty and weakness soon led to efforts at reform. Then in quick succession, arose a series of military leaders who

aimed to secure by the sword what could no longer be obtained through constitutional and legal means.

Marius, a great general, could only break down and destroy. Sulla, a sincere but narrow-minded stateman, could do no more than prop up the already tottering structure of senatorial rule. Pompey soon undid that work, and left the constitution to become again the sport of rival soldiers.

Caesar, triumphing over Pompey, gained a position of unchallenged supremacy. Temporarily interrupted by Caesar's sudden death, imperial power was permanently restored in the person of Augustus. Thus one century sufficed to destroy the republic.

This was the century which produced Cicero, Lucretius, and Vergil, about whose religious experience we are now to write. The boyhood of Vergil heard stories of the terrible Social War of 90 B. C. when the Italians won the franchise, but only after fearful slaughter. What wonder that Vergil devoted all the power of his genius to extolling peace and denouncing war!

Lucretius, too, was witness to this chaos of conflicting forces, and his matchless "DeNatura" is the voice through which he expressed the pity and horror with which he beheld such scenes.

Through all his early years Cicero watched the clouds gathering around the breaking republic and he wrote, "So great a horror of those days is branded upon the state that neither men, nor even the beasts of the field, will (again) endure those wrongs." (1)

(1)--Cicero's Oration against Catiline, Chap. 2, Section 20.

Chapter II.

(A)--The Religion of Cicero.

Cicero best reflects the tendency toward individualism, and the general religious tendencies prevailing at the close of the Republican Era. In his day we have a period of money and politics, not of ideals. Priests entered into politics, temples decayed, augurs applied their science to block unpopulal political measures. The old cult and ritual was losing its appeal.

Most touching of all was the abandoning of private sacrifices. To satisfy religious needs, the sensational was sought. Magna Mater had a temple on the Palatine hill. Her clashing priests were famed in the streets of Rome. Other gods of the Orient followed in her train. The attitude of the state toward religious practices was interesting. They frankly disbelieved in the state religion, but they maintained that it was a patriotic duty to defend that religion.

Cicero always favored the practice of the state religion. From the early years of his youth to the time of his death there was not a moment in which Cicero's heart did not beat for Rome. He thought that for the good of the state, religious observances should be fostered, that men should feign belief in the practices of the augurs.

Cicero's three religious discourses are "De Natura Deorum," "De Divinatione," and "De Fato." In "De Divinatione" he writes, "Many religious mistakes of the past have been corrected. But the opinion of the people and the great good of the state requires

custom, religious discipline, and the laws of augurs and the college to be retained."

If Cicero's books had been written 100 years later we should suspect that he had a knowledge of Christianity. In "Scipio's Dream" we come very near to that divine teaching which Cicero was not permitted to hear,--the doctrine of the soul's immortality and of heaven won by virtue.

We learn from Cicero's writings of his belief in eternity, in virtue for its reward hereafter, in the omnipotence of God, in conscience, honesty, and in one's duty to his neighbor. His whole life exemplified the golden rule. When he served officially in Sicily and in Cilicia he would take no money from the poor provincials, although he had a legal right to do so.

Why did Cicero take such an un-Roman pleasure in making people happy? He did not teach religion, but he did see the way to so much of the truth as to perceive that there was a heaven,--that the way to it must be found in good deeds here on earth.

In the Archias he expresses clearly his belief in another world. "An vero tam parvi animi videamur---ut nobiscum simul moritura omnia arbitremur?" ("Or do we seem so small of soul that we think all things are going to die with us?") (1)

Again in "De Republica" he expresses his belief in heaven. "Certum esse in caelo definitum locum ubi beati aevo sempiterno fruantur." ("There is certainly a place in heaven where the blessed shall enjoy eternal life.") (2) This idea is worthy of St. Paul.

(1)--Pro Archia, Chapter 12.

(2)--De Republica, Book 6. (Fragmentary- the chapters are different in different editions.)

Cicero tells us his belief in virtue for its reward hereafter in these lines from "De Republica". "You shall put your hope neither in man's opinion, nor in human rewards, but virtue itself by its own charms shall lead you the way to true glory". (1) (Also see De Fin.lib.3,ca.22.)

He believed in the omnipotence of God,-"Quam vim,-quem Deum appellant." "This force they call the soul of the world, and looking on it as perfect in intelligence, they name it their God".

"There has been from all time an eternity which no measurement of time can describe. Its duration cannot be understood- that there should have been a time before time existed". (3) Then the idea of God escapes from him in the midst of his philosophy,- modern, human, and truly Ciceronian, "Lo, it comes to pass that the God, of whom we are sure in our minds, and of whom we hold the very footprints in our souls, can never appear to us". (2)

Cicero's confidence in God's watchfulness over man is in these lines," Who is there, when he thinks that a God is taking care of him, shall not live day and night in awe of his divine majesty?"

Pagans before and after Cicero had only vague ideas of Man's duty to his neighbor, but Cicero in "De Officiis" has many references to this obligation, and indeed the whole of Cicero's life is an example of his conception of this duty.

(1)- De Republica, Liber VI

(2)- De Natura Deorum, I, Chapter 14.
(3)- De Nature Deorum, I,Chapter 9.

"All duty", he writes, "which tends to protect the society of man with man is to be preferred to that of which Science is the simple object". (De Off. lib.1, ca. 44.)

All the writings of Cicero give us evidence of his devotion to the cause of Justice.

We today have learned religion and its laws from our from our parents' teachings about the moral laws. The Romans knew no such law, except a few who found it in the recesses of their own souls, as Cicero did. "Suis te oportet illecebris ipsa virtus trahat ad verum decus". (Virtue by its own charms shall lead you the way to glory.) To us this is a commonplace, but in Cicero's time the idea was new.(De Rep. lib. 6)

The Greek philosophers taught that beauty was in virtue, and it made a man happy if he gained it, but it did not mean God and Heaven. There was in it nothing to redeem the fear of death.

Cicero lived in a pagan age, but he had not a pagan's mind. He it was who first told his brother Romans of an intelligible Heaven. "Certum esse in caelo definitum." (Note 2,P 26.) Horace and Ovid thought it well to speak often of the nation's gods, but only because it was the fashion to pretend belief on account of the lower classes. No passage in Livy or Tacitus shows religious belief(1), but Cicero's writings are full of such passages.

In the fifth and last book of "De Finibus," Cicero falls into praise of brotherly love, and introduces us to that philosophy which really guided his life,--"ipsa caritas generis Humani."

(1)- i.e. in the sense of belief in one Supreme Power, in future reward and punishment, and in immortality.

"Among many things," he says, "which are honest, nothing shines so brightly as the brotherhood between men." (1) We look in vain for this great truth in the works of all the philosophers. Christ afterwards taught it. This was the lessoned which governed Cicero's life, a Golden Rule. The other schools taught how a man should make himself happy, but never how he should think first of the happiness of others.

The pith and marrow of Christian teaching is the Golden Rule. Before Christianity and the Brotherhood of Man there was individual greatness and national honor, but without that law not so much of good. Cicero found the law of brotherhood, "That brotherhood between men, that agreement as to what may be useful to all, and that general love for the human race." (1)

If, as some think, the purport of Christianity be to live after a god-like fashion rather than to worship God in a peculiar form, then Cicero lived in accordance with Christ's teaching. The urbanity, the sweetness and humanity of a friend were all there.

With him love of country comes first,--honesty and honor next,--then family affection,--then brotherhood of man. Cicero believes in dignity, manliness, truth, mercy, long-suffering, forgiveness, and humanity. Cicero was almost a Christian, even before the coming of Christ.

(1)--De Finibus, Liber V, Chapter 23.

(B)--The Philosophy of Cicero.

Cicero did not live in accordance with the doctrine of any special school of philosophy. He was too honest, too modern, for him pleasure was frankly pleasant,--ills were unpleasant. He avoided pain. His natural bent was too unscientific to appreciate the strong grip of principle, the joy of research, the triumph of grasping a new truth.

Cicero lived in the last century of the republic,when philosophy was making its pathetic attempt to breathe new life into the dead religion of the state. Cicero was of course familiar with the teachings of the various schools of philosophy. In his five books "De Finibus" we think that the whole subject will be settled as to whether the Epics, the Stoics, or the Academicians were right. But Cicero does not prove to be what the true philosopher would be. He does not show us what is good and where to find it.

Cicero sometimes praises philosophers, but in the (2) "Lucullus" he ridicules the various guesses of the old philosophers as to the infinite. He speaks out clearly "What means it all? Who knows anything about it? How can a man live by listening to such trash?" (1) He suggests that if he were to make nothing of philosophy, his amusement would be gone. Again in "De Oratore" he ridicules philosophy. "If in courts no feeling is shown for fear the Stoic should hear."

For one year--the second year before his death--Cicero wrote philosophy. But he devoted himself to the subject with the eagerness only of the student, much as he studied rhetoric

(1) Acad.I,Bk.2, ca.37.)
(2) See Page 30A.

Reference for Page 30,Par. 3.(Cicero's "Lucullus")-see ft.note 3.

During the second last year of his life, Cicero devoted himself to writing his philosophical treatises. The first of these, in point of time, was the "Academica." This treatise represented Catulus, Lucullus, Hortensius, and Cicero discussing Greek philosophy before the public.

Cicero sent the first copy to Atticus.He then altered his plan of publication, and rewrote the essays, altering them, before he sent them on to Varro. Of the copy sent to Atticus, the second half has been preserved, and of that sent to Varro, the first half has been saved.

The "Lucullus" was the second of the first copy sent to Atticus. The "Catulus" came first. "Hortensius" and "Cicero" were the last two. Lucullus had lived with Antiochus, a Greek philosopher who had certain views of his own, and he is made to defend them through this book.(1)

In the "Lucullus"he ridicules the guesses of the various philosophers as to the infinite. "Your wise man", says Cicero,"Will know which to choose out of all these. Let the others, who have been repudiated,retire." (2)

(1) Academica,I,Lib.2,ca.7; ibid.ca.29

(2) AcademicaI,Lib.2,ca.37.

(3)See Trollope,"Life of Cicero",Vol.II,Pages281 and 282.

and literature. With him philosophy was a game, ornamented with all the learning of the past ages. Cicero took refuge in philosophy because the Forum was closed to him. He could no longer talk politics. Also by this study he distracted his mind after the death of Tullia. He did not suddenly, for the year only, become a philosopher.

He himself tells us the truth, "But now, hit hard by the (1) heavy blow of fortune, I seek from philosophy a relief from my pain." (2) But what he writes about is not so much philosophy as the philosophers.

It is vain to seek to ascertain a special doctrine of such a man as Cicero on such a subject. To him it is merely a playing with theories as the most interesting sport the world has produced,--not believing any of them.

He wrote an elaborate polished appeal for the Stoics, representing Cato as saying it. Cicero wrote it because he had nothing else to do to satisfy the cravings of his intellect. Then in the fourth book he courteously demolishes all Cato's arguments. (3)

Cicero loved to call himself an admirer of Plato,--yet he also followed Aristotle who had diverged from Plato. He did not practice the teachings of p ilosophy. Cicero feared death because it would take him from the scenes he sympathized with. He was peculiarly alert to avoid pain. He was heartbroken at Tullia's death. His letters to Atticus prove this.

(1)--See Page 31A.

(2)--Academica II, Book I, Chapter 3.

(3)--De Fin. Lib. IV, ca.1.

Reference for Page 31, Par. 1. (Why Cicero turned to the writing of philosophy.)

De Officiis, Lib. II,--"When the Republic had ceased to be, that Republic which had been all my care, my employment ceased both in the Forum and in the Senate. But when my mind absolutely refused to be inactive, (Nihil agere autem cum animus non posset) I thought I might best live down the misery of the time if I devoted myself to philosophy."

De Officiis III, ca. I,-"I have not strength enough for silent solitude, and therefore give myself up to my pen."

In a later chapter we shall write more fully about the theories of the Stoic and Epicurean schools. Here we need to tell only Cicero's reaction to these philosophies.

Epicureanism was never a true part of Roman religious thought. It denied the existence of a future life, and thus offered to some a relief from uncertainty. True happiness, according to this philosophy, lay in pleasure, but pleasure of the intellect, not of the senses. Epicureanism would have made the atomic theory a veritable gospel for Rome. To Cicero this theory was identical with atheism.

Cicero either edited or corrected for Lucretius his "De Natura Rerum." It is said by Suetonius that as Lucretius wrote his books he showed them to Cicero and paid heed to Cicero's criticism. Cicero writes, "Epicurus is disproved by himself. His writings are refuted by his own uprightness and character. His life shows rectitude was inherent in him without any thought of personal advantage."

Ten years later he wrote, "I often wonder at the presumption of certain philosophers who admire a knowledge of Nature, give thanks to the Founder of it, and worship Him as a God. For they declare that by Him they have been delivered from grievous tyrants and perpetual fear both by night and by day." (1) Evidently Cicero was here thinking of certain passages of Lucretius, as, "Quae bene cognita si teneas, natura videtur, Libera continuo, dominis privata superbis--" (2)

(1)--Tusculan Disputations, I--21.

(2)--Lucretius, De Natura, Book II, 1090.

The Epicureans taught that the abode of the gods was in no part of the world, but in the intermundia,(between two worlds.) Cicero in amusement says,"The Epicurean says his deities are transparent, and so frail that the wind can blow through them, and he puts them between two worlds, for fear of ruins if either world were shattered." (1)

Again he ridicules their conception of the gods."They say the gods have no body, but something like a body; no blood, but something like blood." This definition greatly amused the adversaries of Epicurus.

"Imagine,"says Cicero through his spokesman Cotta,"the Deity meditating through all Eternity on nothing else but'I am happy,- all is well with me.' Can there be any excellence in that nature which only contemplates its own happiness, and neith-does, nor ever did, nor ever will do, anything?" (2)

At the beginning of the "De Natura Deorum" Cicero well expresses the common sense characteristic of every Roman."If the gods have no interest in human affairs, where is there room for pietas, for sanctitas, for religio? What is the use of worship, or honor, or prayer? Pietas cannot exist if these are simply make-believes, and with it we may almost assume that fides and iustitia, and the social virtues generally, which hold society together, must vanish too." This criticism is characteristically Roman. We may take it as representing accureately the feeling of the old-fashioned Roman of Cicero's day, as well that of the Stoic or Academic critic of Epicurus.

(1) De Divinatione, Book II, 40.

(2) De Natura Deorum.

And yet Cicero was a close friend of many Epicureans, Atticus for one. Lucretius may have been one of the circle, but the difference of bent between Cicero and Lucretius was so profound as to amount almost to antagonism. Cicero would call "De Natura Rerum" an un-Roman book for its political quietism if nothing else. Both were masters of expression, but in a very different sense.

Cicero argues about the happiness of the gods, their beauty of form, and their likeness to the human form. Through Cotta he asks," What is better, what is more excellent than kindness and beneficence? When you decide that God lacks these qualities, you decide that no one, whether God or man, is dear to God,- is loved by Him." These are great words, strong and daring in their significance.

The Tusculan Disputations were written by Cicero, supposedly to console himself for the death of Tullia. In these writings he sets forth the Stoic doctines, of which we shall write more in a later chapter. Death, he holds is no evil,- pain does not exist,- sorrow may be abolished,- passions may be conquered,- virtue brings happiness. But he did not pract- the philosophy which he wrote. He did fear death, as we have shown before. He was heart-broken at Tullia's death.His own passions were never conquered. He never tried to control them. He revelled in them. He was always always indignant or triumphant or miserable or rejoicing.

The evidence we gain from Cicero's life and actions semms to prove that he found much comfort in the writing of philosophy, but not in practicing the doctrines of philosophy.

(C)--Cicero and the Pythagorean Influence.

The deepest and truest religious experience of Cicero's came to him, without doubt, during his last two years,--the years following the death of his beloved Tullia. He himself has left the truth of this on record, in his letters to Atticus.

There was current in Rome during the later years of the Republic a strong mystical influence in philosophy, which in Italy took the form of Pythagoreanism. The religious instinct of Cicero's time was not that of simple men struggling with agricultural difficulties, but of educated men whose minds could pass in emotional moments far beyond the troubles of this present world to speculate on great questions. Why are we here? What are we? What becomes of us after death?

This influence may be identified with the Orphic doctrines, of which we wrote at length in the first part of this paper. (1) These doctrines and mystic practices are interwoven with Roman religious experience in numerous ways. There were in Pythagorism underlying ideas which were truly religious,--a belief in a future life, the idea of this life as a preparation for the next, the belief in the need of purification in another life, the conviction that in this life preparatory discipline should be practiced. These doctrines had a most vital influence on ancient religion. They shifted man's outlook from this world to the next, and made two great contributions,--they brought belief in immortality, and belief in personal holiness. Pythagoreanism demanded not only ceremonial purity, but purity of life, hence we have a bond between religion and morality.

(1)--See Pages 10 and 11 of this paper.

The Pythagorean movement marks a reaction against the whole tendency of Roman religious experience, against the extreme and meaningless formalism of the state religion: against the extreme scepticism and indifference of the last two centuries B. C.; and against the purely intellectual appeal of the Epicurean and the Stoic.

Stoicism could favor this mystic belief, because there was to Stoicism a religious side which Epicurism did not have. But even to the Stoic the thought was foreign that the sole sources of our knowledge are not limited to intellect and senses. This idea is the essence of mystic Pythagorism.

The true home of Pythagorism was Southern Italy. There its founder established the doctrines and there for centuries it remained latent, sharing the Orphic practices until the two coalesced. Plato, it is said, went to Southern Italy to study this philosophy and to learn the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Posidonius, a historian, philosopher, and traveler, who dominated the intellectual life of Rome from 100 B. C. to 50 B. C. was immediately responsible for this tendency to mysticism.

He accepted the theory of the dualism of soul and body,--(1) the separation of the spiritual from the material. This gave mysticism its chance, for in such a dualism, the soul always gains in value, and the body loses. Life becomes an imprisonment of the soul in the body,--death is only the beginning of a new life.

Cicero was strongly influenced by Pythagorism, and after his retirement from political life, he wrote, in 54 B. C. his "Dream (2) of Scipio," a beautiful myth which plainly reflects the

(1)--Tusc. Disp. I, 16. (Death cannot be an evil, once we allow that the soul is immortal.)

(2)--See Page 36A.

Reference for Page 36. (The influence of Pythagoreanism on Cicero.)

Also Cicero shows the Pythagorean influence brought to him by Figulus, a famous Pythagorean whom he met at Ephesus, and with whom he talked. Figulus was an old friend of Cicero,--had helped Cicero in his consulship. Figulus wrote on many subjects, but his reputation as a Pythagorean lived many centuries.

In the introduction to the "Tusculan Disputations," Cicero mentions this conversation with Figulus and shows the direction of his thoughts toward Pythagoreanism, during the last two years of his life.

doctrine of dualism of soul and body. The soul is represented as flying upward released from corporeal bondage, to pure aether, if its body on earth has been that of a good citizen. Here Cicero leaves behind all the old ideas of future life as a gloomy existence beneath the earth. (1) "Deum igitur--- sempiternus movet."

Early in 45 B. C. Cicero's daughter Tullia died. Between him and Tullia there had existed a rare and beautiful attachment. Cicero was heartbroken at his loss. "I could always go to Tullia," he wrote, "and find sympathy and understanding." In his letters to Atticus after this time, there is strong evidence of Pythagorean influence at work, as he tries to find consolation. In these letters we get the most frequent glimpses of Cicero's real personality--his sincerest thoughts, and, from the Roman point of view, it is startling to find that Cicero thinks of Tullia as in a sense still surviving, and as divine. (2)

The Latin word "Manes" had no singular form. According to the Roman idea, the manes were, practically not at all individualized. But in this case we have a clear conception of an individual spirit. Tullia does not fade away into the throng of manes, but like a spirit, remains the same individual Tullia.

We know that he thinks of her spirit as divine from his letter to Atticus explaining that he wishes a "fanum" erected in Tullia's memory,--not a mere tomb, but a "fanum." "I think that I could secure that posterity should respect its sanctity." The word Cicero uses is "religio", which suggests a hallowed spot.

(1)--See Page 4 of this paper.

(2)--Cicero's letters,--Ad Atticum, XII, 36.

His choice of the word religio plainly shows that he thinks of Tullia as a divine spirit. In subsequent letters Cicero repeats this wish and we realize the intensity of his feeling about it. He really wishes Tullia to be thought of as having passed into a sphere of divinity.

It was under the same mystic influence that Vergil wrote "Quisque suos patimur Manes." (We suffer each individual of us his own ghosthood.)(1) This process of individualization must have come to the Romans gradually. The steps are lost to us. Possibly it came about as a natural result of the growth of individualism in human beings during the last two centuries B. C. During that period individual personality was emphasized, and there must have come a corresponding growth in the idea of individual immortality.

In many previous writings Cicero had shown himself to favor Agnostic beliefs. (2) But when he was touched by grief his emotional nature abandoned its neutral attitude and turned for consolation to mysticism. He persuaded himself that Tullia still lived, a glorified spirit. In his "Consolatio" he insists on the spiritual nature which is inherent in the soul. (See Page 38A.) It is of the same immaterial nature as God himself. His daughter, he says, is still living in a spiritual life, but she is in a sense divine. "Te omnium optimam----approbantibus dis ipsis---- consecrabo."

In the last words of the famous "Laudatio Turiae," we sense the same religious feeling. "I pray that thy divine Manes may

(1)--Aeneid, Book VI, Line 743.

(2)--Ad Familiares, IV, 5, 6.----

References for Page 38, Par. 3. (The "Consolatio.")

"Tusc. Disp."-Book I, 27, 66.--Here Cicero quotes a precious passage from his own "Consolatio." It is the only fragment that we have, excepting one or two quoted by Lactantius.

The "Consolatio" was written at Astura. This form of writing was a recognised literary form of this and later times. In this case it was addressed to the writer himself.

Lactantius, who quoted the other two remaining fragments, was an early Christian writer. He was a great admirer of Cicero, and came near to catching the beauty of Cicero's style.

The passage quoted by Cicero himself, in his "Tusculan Disputations," insists on the spiritual nature of the soul, which is the same in its nature as God himself,--of the same immaterial nature, as the only Deity of which we mortals can conceive. His daughter Tullia, he says, is still living, not only living in a spiritual life, but she is, in a sense, divine.--"Te omnium optimam doctissimamque approbantibus dis immortalibus ipsis on eorum coetu locatam, ad opinionem omnium mortalium consecrabo."

Lactantius writes that Stoics and Pythagoreans both believe in immortality of the soul. He deals with the Pythagorean doctrine that in this life we are expiating the sins of another, and quotes Cicero's "Consolatio" to that effect. "Quid Ciceronis Faciemus? Qui cum in principio 'Consolationis' suae dixit, luendorum scelerum causa nasci homines, iteravit ad ipsum postea, quasi obeurgans eum qui vitam poenam non esse putet."

keep thee in peace and watch over thee." These words express the hope of a practical man, not a philosopher, and are difficult to explain except as the utterances of an individual personality. They have no exact parallel either in literature or inscriptions. They help us to realize that in the last century of the Roman Republic there was among men a mystical yearning to sense the condition of loved ones gone before, and their relation to the living.

Without doubt Cicero was swayed by this same longing. Brought face to face with one of the mystical facts of life the true religious instinct awoke in him, and he experienced the deepest and truest religious emotions of his life.

Chapter III.

(A)--Vergil and His Ideals.

Concerning Vergil and his religious experience, Sellar has said "His religious belief, like his other speculative convictions, was composite and undefined, yet it embraced what was purest and most vital in the religion of antiquity, and, in its deepest intuitions, seems to look forward to Christianity." (1)

Vergil collected all that was best from the religious tradition of the ages gone before,--he added to this new elements of spiritual hope. "For those who have read Vergil," writes St. Beuve, "there is nothing astonishing in Christianity."

Vergil represents a new ideal. In the lines of Aeneid VI dealing with Augustus, the poet mentions not the triumphs won in war by Augustus, but that he brought the golden age of peace and justice, (2) and, at the end (3) he pictures the ruler's journey in triumph through Europe, like Hercules. This was a new ideal of peace by forgiveness--conciliation instead of punishment--the ideal of mercy. For this same ideal of just and humane government Cicero had lived and died, but the deeper human sympathy is Vergil's own.

In Vergil's picture gallery of Roman heroes he has faint praise, or open censure, for the warriors. (4) Brutus, who sentenced his own son, he calls "infelix." To Julius Caesar he makes a lament for civil war and a plea to throw away the sword. (5)

(1)--W. W. Fowler, "Religious Experience of the Roman People." P. 403

(2)--Aeneid, VI, 791-807. (3)--Aeneid VI, 801-805.

(4)--Aeneid VI, 819--821. (5)--Aeneid VI, 832--835.

Among the characters who people Elysium the warriors come first, but only because they had suffered for their country,and the mention made of them is only a brief one.(1) The climax comes when the poet writs of the virtues of peace and human affection."Hic manus ob patriem --quique pii vates--qui vitam excoluere per artes-." (2) --"Whoso through life kept priestly honor pure,-Or found new arts and made the world more fair,
They whose good service made their memory loved,
These all are crowned with wreaths of snowy wool."

Again Vergil speaks the high ideals- which are his true religion,- in the famous description of the duty to which Rome is called,-"Others, I well believe, with finer touch
Shall kindle breath in forms of bronze, and carve
Faces of marble all aglow with life;
Others shall plead with greater eloquence,-
Make chart of heaven and tell the rising stars,-
But choose thou, son of Rome, the imperial task
Of ruling peoples; this shall be thy art.
Show mercy to the humble, crush the proud,
And make the nations learn the law of peace."

Vergil's spirit of love for mankind, his brave and patient humanity, are in evidence constantly throughout the second half of the Aeneid.R.S.Conway says," This part of the poem gives us the full embodiment of duty to which Rome is called. Here we have the ideal ruler in conflict with concrete forces of selfishness, passion, and ignorance. The history of his time impressed Vergil, and this makes the whole fabric of

(1)-Aeneid VI, Lines 650 ff.
(2)- Aeneid VI, Lines 660-665.
(3)- Aeneid VI, Lines 847-853.

his poem. But we can trace here only its thread of gold. The thought that shines through the story is that no such warfare ought to be. It is not the natural way to settle human questions. It is the unnatural way,- the impious way. Reasonableness and pity are the greatest prerogatives of power."

Vergil's courageous humanity is in perpetual contrast with unscrupulous passion for war. In the second part of the Aeneid, Juno sends the Fury "To sow slanderous seed, that blood may be the harvest,-- and fill at once hearts, voices, hands, with war." (1) When Aeneas killed Lausus, who rushed in when his father Mezentius retreated, Aeneas said with Christian chivalry,

"- as in his soul there rose
The likeness of the love he bore his sire
'Poor boy! What guerdon for thy glorious deeds
Say what, to match that mighty heart of thine
Shall good Aeneas yield thee? Those thine arms
Wherein thou gloriedst,- keep them." (2)

We cannot find in all of Homer's poems a passage so suggestive of Christian spirit, nor in any poetry before that of Christian chivalry. These lines are in sharp contrast to those words of Turnus, when he slew Prince Pallas, "Would that his father were here to see him fall!" (3)

At the close, Aeneas is forced to slay Turnus, because he could not be trusted to live in the new era, but with

(1)- Aeneid, Book VII, Lines 335 340.
(2)- Aenied, Book X, lines 821-832.
(3)- Aeneid, Book XI, line 443.

what pity for his fall! Nowhere does Vergil express with more feeling his sense of the incompleteness of the greatest human triumph. Even in the victory of Aeneas there is reason for sorrow, because the deeper enemy,- the wilfulness of human passion is yet to be destroyed."Surely," says Conway," if more than human breath ever moved in human utterance, some whisper, at least, of Divine inspiration must be heard in such an ending to such a poem as this."

As Dante says,"We think of Vergil as one who goes by night and bears a light behind him and after him makes the people wise."

It was an accident that Vergil's teaching was studied as almost an integral part of Christian teaching and revelation, but it was not an accident that his teaching was so profound, so pure, so merciful,so truly in accord with divine precept.

The minds of the early centuries could think of him only as a direct prophet and so an interpreter of Christ. And those who think Vergil unworthy of that divine ministry are not the ones who are the deepest students of Vergil.

(B)-- Vergil and Stoicism.

Fortunate it was for Rome that in the second century B.C. her best and ablest men fell into the hands, not of Epicureans, but of Stoics. The Roman was wavering in regard to God and Duty,and Stoicism wakened in his mind an entirely new idea of the Deity which was far above the idea of numina and Greek deities, yet it could be reconciled with these.

Vergil , although he did not accept the Stoic teachings

in their entirety, was plainly much influenced by this philosophy, in his life, and in his writings. In order to understand the power which this system exercised on Vergil and other thinking Romans we must make clear the conception which Stoicism offered of man's place in the universe.

The Roman learned from Stoicism that there is, above and beyond all numina, yet embracing them, a Power to which, and by the help of which, he, as a man of reason, must conform his life. The kernel of the Stoic ethical system lay in two leading thoughts. First, that the whole Universe shows unmistakeably the work of Reason,- of Mind. Second, that man himself alone, of all creatures, shares with God the full possession of Reason. Man must try to realize himself as having Reason,- he must try to bring himself to perfect expression by identifying himself with the divine principle which he shares with God.

The Stoics represent, as do the Epicureans, a reaction of the individual against the state, and yet they held that man's Reason bade him realize himself in association with his fellows. This theory made a strong appeal to the Roman mind. The Universe is like one great Civitas in which both God and Man are citizens. The constitution in this Civitas is Reason, which all must obey. The Roman could easily grasp this idea of a supreme Imperium.

The Stoic doctrine led its followers into a kind of Fatalism- a destined order in the world which nothing could oppose. Yet they assert Free Will constantly, in this way,- man through knowledge,"has choice whether he will be a willing or an unwilling servant of universal Reason." (1)

(1) Dr Caird, in the Gifford Lectures-II- 96.

A mind like that of Vergil could accept much of the Stoic doctrine, but could not embrace altogether a system which acknowledged no mission to encourage the spirit of philanthropy and brotherly love. Vergil knew how sadly the Roman needed the spirit of of gentleness, pity, and helpfulness. To encourage that spirit Vergil did all he could. It remained for Christianity to fulfill that mission, after Vergil's day.

Stoicism glorified the idea of law and order in an age when the Roman world seemed to be forgetting what these sacred words meant. But the system lacked a real active enthusiasm for humanity. There was about its teachings a certain hopelessness,which is typified in a way by the later Stoic Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, of whom it has been written,"He could not conquer the enemy of his doctrine, but he could hold out till the last, and die at his post."

Vergil, in Book VI of the Aeneid, expressly declares, through the lips of Anchises, the truth of a large part of the Stoic teaching.Especially does he dwell with approval on the Stoic pantheistic belief in a World Soul,- that life is of divine origin, and every living thing can claim a share in the divine nature.(1)

The doctrine of a Supreme Good to which men must adjust their lives, appealed to Vergil, apparently, as did also the Stoic ideal of a wise man respecting God within, and living in communion with the Universal. From beginning to end the Aeneid is permeated with the Stoic doctrine of fate. The wickedness inherent in matter, and the evils springing from our material bodies

(1)--Aeneid, Book VI- lines 730 ff.

are Stoic beliefs echoed in Aeneid VI.

Vergil did commend the Stoic doctrine of virtue for its own sake, but he surely did not accept their idea of philosophical calm, of complete indifference to joy or sorrow. In this he was certainly not a Stoic.Nor was Anchises attitude that of a Stoic when he rejoiced with Aeneas over the future greatness of Rome, (1) and wept over the death of the young Marcellus.(2) So it is evident that when Anchises says joy, sorrow, desire, and fear are the fruit of our evil material side, he does not mean every kind of joy,- only selfish joy. Some joys and some sorrows were to Vergil the most precious part of life.

Human affection was to Vergil a tragic contradiction, in that it is the source of the only joys worth counting as joys, and the only sorrows worth counting as sorrows. Examples of this we see in the story of Dido, the victim of the misguided affections of Juno, Venus, and her own unhappy love; the tragedy of Juturna and her love for her brother; the war in Latium, and Silvia's love for her stag.

In this common source of human joy and sorrow Vergil found the enigma which for him wrapped the world in mystery. All pain and all joy are to be measured simply in terms of human love. (3) This human love is the Golden Bough that brings us through dark shadows to the light beyond. Its power and persistence overcomes even death.In his realization of this force Vergil senses one of the greatest truths of religion. This is one of his most important contributions to Christian ethics.

(1)- Aeneid VI- Line 718.

(2) Aeneid VI- Line 868.

(3)-Georgics IV- Lines 453-527.(The Story of Orpheus and Eurydice.)

Many efforts have been made even to our own day to extract from the mystical pageantry of Book VI a coherent body of scientific and theological doctrine, in order to assign to Vergil an exact place among the schools of thought, and framers of systems. All such attempts are vain. It is true he was as much a philosopher as he was a poet. He was called the Plato of the poets.

Poetry, it has been said, is the ultimate expression of both philosophy and history. It not only interprets, but recreates both. Vergil was not, in his ideas, a philosopher first. He was a poet . He was not an Epicurean, a Pythagorean, a Stoic, or a Platonist, although his masterpiece incorporated much of the doctrines of all of these systems.

Vergil was the imaginative interpreter and the spiritual creator of a great ideal,- one which was re-embodied thirteen hundred years later in Dante. This was the ideal of human pity, of brotherly love and mercy.In his Aeneid Vergil attained the heights to an extent seldom granted to any poet, and the vitality and vitalizing power of his ideal are immortal. It is the supreme ideal for human life, for the nations, and for the world.

Augustus is represented as the epitome of this ideal,- the supreme benefactor of mankind.Augustus is represented as a god, but as one doing work for man. He becomes a god so that he may do vital service to the world of man. Throughout the Aeneid, whenever Augustus is pictured as divine, it is because he saves mankind from the horrors of the anarchy and war of the century ending with Actium.This representation served as a step by which the Roman world was lifted toward that ideal of manhood which began to be unfolded only nineteen years after Vergil's death.

(C) Vergil and Lucretius.

If Lucretius had never lived and written his great poem, Vergil might never have become the poet whose deep and rich humanity has made him one of the world's best-beloved and greatest teachers. Lucretius held up before Vergil's eyes the hard facts of the world,--the unequal fight of men with Nature,--but the reaction of Vergil to these facts was quite different from that of Lucretius. He was cast in a different mold from the great Epicurean poet, and the thought of human suffering roused all Vergil's eagerness to help mankind suffering the cruel stress and strain of life.

On the day of Lucretius' death, Vergil, then fifteen years of age, assumed the toga virilis. Without doubt the new and great poem of Lucretius, which startled Rome, was the inspiration of Vergil's youth. In a great many lines of Vergil we find echoes of the De Rerum Natura. The Second Georgic shows much of Lucretius' influence, as does also the sixth Eclogue. (2) (1)

The daring of the older poet's work, and the splendor of the gifts so unlike his own, appealed to the young Vergil, who was at an age when the work of genius impresses the mind most deeply. The marvelous imaginative powers of Lucretius made vivid all the wonder of the world,--the mingling of beauty and terror--the impotence of man against the mighty forces of nature, while the "stern stars" looked down, pitiless and cold.

At first the young Vergil was completely carried away with Lucretius' verse. In an early poem he bids farewell to youth, rhetoric, and poetry, and says he will study philosophy as an

(1)-Georgics II, 42. Cf. Lucr. V. 1542.
Georgics II, 294. Cf. Lucr. I, 202.
Georgics II, 490-512. Cf. Lucr. III, 1072; also I. 78: and III, 37.
(2)-Eclogue VI, 31-40. Cf. Lucr. V, 416-508.

Epicurean. "Nos ad beatos vela mittimus portus--magni petentes docta dicta Sironis."

In the sixth Eclogue, he discribes the creation of the world (1) in accordance with the ideas of Lucretius, that is, four elements formed by the concourse of atoms in a mighty void. His early ambition was to expound the laws governing Nature on the earth, seas, and heaven,--a glorious task, he says.

Vergil was of a deeply religious nature, and he was deeply impressed with the new truth of Lucretius, but, as he grew older, he felt that these did not fully account for the world and its life. For the gentle Vergil, the call of the Muses who love the ways of men, was stronger than the appeal of the colder Muse of science.

In the country districts of Mantua, where Vergil was born and bred, the old religion of Rome still lived in its purity. He was sensitive to the simplicity and beauty of its rites,--its prayers to rustic gods for increase in field and fold. The conflict of feeling caused him by Lucretius' influence is shown in a famous and beautiful passage. "First of all I would pray that the Muses would teach me the courses of the stars in heaven. But if I should be restrained--let me love river and woodland with an unambitious love. Happy the man who has--trampled under foot all fears and the relentless decree of death.--Blessed too is he who has won the friendship of the rustic gods, Pan, and old Sylvanus, and the sisterhood of the Nymphs." (2)

These lines show a reaction in the feelings of Vergil. The reign of law in Nature was grand, but the innate religious sense of Vergil told him that Lucretius' belief was cold, and left the world lonely and empty.

(1)--Ec. VI. l.31-40.

(2)--Georgics II, 475-494. ("Felix qui-metus omn s et--fatum subiecit pedibus--deos qui novit agrestes, Panaque Silvanumque senem, Nymphasque sorores.")

To some this might seem in Vergil merely a weak compromise. It might seem that his intellect accepted the decree of science, but that he refuses the truth because he regrets the old cheerful worship. But Vergil's mind was great enough to conceive of truth which his intellect could not formulate. The world is too vast, and Lucretius' solution of it was far too complete ever to satisfy Vergil's religious sense.

The conflict which was stirred in the younger poet by Lucretius shook him loose from the popular false ideas about the gods,- it opened his eyes to the hollowness of formal worship. Vergil wakened to that bitter sense of man's nothingness in the infinite universe,- that realization which saps man's courage in facing life's crises.

It is a proof of Vergil's noble nature that all this only drove him to hold even more strongly to his ethical convictions of the value of goodness and purity, which were bound up in his own religious feeling.

Many varying religious beliefs of Vergil's own day shifted around him. His poems reflect these, and the beliefs of the past, Roman, Greek, and Oriental, as well as the conflicting theories of Pythagoreanism, and the other philosophies. But his love for humanity, his sense of the value of righteousness, of goodness and purity,- on this ground his anchorage held, even while he doubted whether the Unseen Power sides with the right, or cares whether individuals perish or not, be it Dido, Pallas, or Marcellus.

Chapter IV.

(A) The Life and Personality of Lucretius.

Among the gifted minds which contributed to Rome's greatness in literature and science, there is none to outrank the genius of Lucretius,- yet there is none which offers a more baffling problem to those who read his great poem.

Lucretius is fascinating for himself, and also because he is, in a sense, the best example of the one really great element of progress which had been accomplished during these long centuries of the Republic. This progress consisted of the slow and gradual rise of the individual.

At first, Rome was filled with a cheerful consciousness of her own nationality. Then, through material prosperity, the social instinct of religion was weakened. Greece gave to Rome new deities, but destroyed the old Roman gods, and Greek ideas in turn proved insufficient.

Thoughtful men were turning away from things which the world held dear, and were striking into new paths all their own. Individualism was rising. Lucretius best exemplifies this tendency of his time.

We know as much of the time in which Lucretius lived, as of any age in the world's history.We know that Lucretius, one of the greatest spirits of that age, has left an impress upon it, and upon each succeeding generation. "-Here rolls

> The large verse of Lucretius, who raised
> His index finger and did strike the face
> Of fleeting time, leaving a scar of thought
> The rain of ages shall not wash away."

The great precept of his teacher Epicurus was "Hide thy life." Lucretius has fulfilled it only too literally. Much that is in his writings would be clearer to us if we knew more details of his life. What is the secret of the electric atmosphere hanging over the poem? What experience made him break with the religion of his day?

Our only historical data comes from St.Jerome in his Chronicle, under the year 94B.C. This tells us briefly"Titus Lucretius, poet, born in 94B.C. was driven mad by a philtre. He wrote, in the intervals of his mental ailment, a number of books, afterwards corrected by Cicero. In his 44th year Lucretius slew himself by his own hand."

A man so keen and passionate as Lucretius must have had an intense and eventful life. Gladly we would learn from him some detail of personal history, or his own part in the busy life of the Republic, but this he never gives. He is too absorbed in his task of teaching salvation and peace to a suffering world.

Intellect and imagination work together in a remarkable way in "De Natura." The poet holds his reader by his burning earnestness of purpose, from the emotional lines of his prologue into even his most scientific discussions. He has a strong personal attraction,- by a kind of charm we follow his figure in front. By his fire and feeling he even makes lucid and beautiful the theory of the atoms.

By studying his poem we gain evidence of the poet himself. We see that he has largely lost interest in life.At the end of the third book, the Roman flees to the country,- then, weary of it, back to the city."So it is with all of us," says Lucretius,"We cannot escape".

"If man could entirely know the cause of his disease," writes Lucretius, "he would put aside all his own affairs and learn the nature of things, namely that life is but an hour compared with everlasting nothingness." Thus, he says, we may cast out all fear of death. "Iam rebus quisque relictis (1) Naturam primum studeat cognoscere rerum."

It is true, as Lucretius says, a burden does oppress the heart, but his cure does not go as deep as the disease. Lucretius has, with the help of Epicurus, cast out fear, but at what a cost. His whole horizon contracted, drawn in,--his highest instincts crushed,--his hopes "forbidden to range in a grand Perhaps." One thing is certain. He did not gain peace. This we learn from his poem, where his whole history utters itself.

We gain, through study of Lucretius' writings, glimpses of three distinct periods in the poet's life. First, his youth, when he was an admirer of Empedocles, and wrote verse very different from that of De Natura. Second, the period of early manhood, when, as a man of the world he may have taken his place in the aristocratic society of Rome. Third, a later period of reaction, and the Epicurean influence. So thorough was his conversion that it is strange he does not tell us when and why the master, whose face he had never seen, who lived whole centuries before him, set his whole soul afire with the wish to help his fellow men.

Lucretius was without doubt of noble family. His name suggests descent from a patrician house and the tone of the entire poem is that of a man in easy circumstances. He is accustomed to luxury, though he is repelled by it. We sense

(1) De Rerum Natura,III,1071-1072.

from his poem a noble spirit hemmed in by fate,--we sense a sadness and loneliness of spirit, as one whose heart and soul never fused in friendship or love with another's. There is throughout his poem an unbroken and unnatural tension. This shows an excessive strain of faculty which might well have produced loss of intellectual power. It is probably certain that Lucretius died by his own hand. And yet through all his poem he reveals a fearless soul. He expresses often his admiration for the spiritual bravery of Epicurus, and his supreme scorn for the cowardice of the soul which dares not look facts in the face, for fear of evils in this world or the next.

Few have felt more deeply than Lucretius, that the cause of all man's unhappiness is in himself. Man needs, He says, some Saviour from without to cleanse his heart, and point out a way of life, and proudly he tells us that Epicurus "viam monstravit".

The brilliant prologues of his poem are throbbing with intense enthusiasm for humanity. Three times he concludes with the same words,--only reason can deliver men from fear and care. "Life is all a struggle in the dark, as children in the dark tremble at unknown dangers." (1) Even his strong intellectual zeal for research pales before the intense warmth of his sympathy for human suffering. This feeling is, we note, a common characteristic of the religion of Cicero, Vergil, and Lucretius.

A small and selfish nature cannot feel such pity for others of human kind. Lucretius feels that to all true hearts the appeal of friends and kinsmen for help is irresistible. "Pudor cogebat", he writes, and here he speaks for himself. The phrase bears the stamp of a Roman gentleman with his old-world notions of what Rome expected of her soldiers and citizens.

(1) De Natura - Book III - lines 54-61

(B) The Religious Experience of Lucretius.

Lucretius belongs in the category of the world's great religious mystics. He is always unconsciously calling men to worship. At first thought he seems sadly out of place in his day and generation, and the object of his worship seems a strange thing. Yet these contradictions are the best evidence of the genuineness of his nature. He was born a religious mystic, and he speaks with all the fervor of a great moral teacher. For instance, in the opening lines of his second book he says, "Nothing is more pleasing than to hold the lofty positions fortified by the learning of the wise from which you may look down upon others and see them wandering and going astray in their search for the path of life.----Oh miserable minds of men!----Thus terror of mind must be dispelled----by the aspect and laws of nature."

Thus Lucretius points the way to salvation, but when we try to follow him we ourselves beat in vain against the iron walls through which his spirit has passed.

Lucretius is loyal to Epicurus and he gives a minute explanation of the birth of the world from Chance, according to his master's doctrine. Yet we read between the lines, and we know that to Lucretius the world was no dead mechanism. Epicurus would have drawn a hard, cold, colorless world. Lucretius in all the scientific details follows his master step by step, but with what a different result. He cannot help thinking of the world as all great poets have done, as divinely, beautiful and grand, and still bright and fresh to him, although his own life is sad. He makes us sense the

wondrous origin, the stupendous encircling forces, the piteous helplessness of men, the richness and loveliness of earth which, though besieged with dangers, flowers into fresh beauty and life every spring, though each spring may be its last one.

Lucretius is ever loyal to his Master, but sometimes human nature was strong within him and he rebelled. When he stood in the presence of the beautiful world he felt something there which was missing in his beloved "De Natura." Even while he stoutly denies any Divine element in the world, this poet of Materialism rouses us to feel that there is something in and behind the grandeur of the world,--behind its ever-changing beauty, which rebukes our sensual impulses and compels our worship.

The world owes to Lucretius the first firm and steadfast exposition of the doctrine of Law and Order in Nature. He treats science for the sake of theology, that is he shows the existence of atoms so that man may live his life aright, free from superstition. Without knowledge of the unchanging laws of Nature man could not learn about her and so secure greater well-being for himself. Lucretius taught this great lesson to the European races, and for this reason his name should always be spoken with gratitude. He is called a materialist but we must remember that he laboriously leveled the road for men to mount to a truer conception of God and His relation to the world.

Lucretius himself never ascended by this path. He had no faith in one Supreme Power. He had only the entanglements and clashing of atoms. His creed is "Nam certe neque consilio." (Verily, not by design.)

When Lucretius wrote "Natura videtur--Ipse sua per se(1) sponte omnia----agere," he rose to a grand conception, but still he never thought that Nature is the Will of God at work. Such a thought would have horrified him. It was reserved for a great religious thinker of the Latin race to say, "Dei voluntas natura rerum est." (The Will of God is the Nature of things.) These are the words of Augustine who was humble and wise enough to learn from those who were opposed to him. This wisdom the Epicureans and Lucretius did not have.

If Lucretius had lived longer, he might have seen the light. He might have realized that nature showed one God at work. But he could not conceive of omnipotence in Deity. He expressly denies it in one passage, where he says that the world is too vast for a Deity to be present in all places and at all times. (2)

Lucretius takes the point of view of some modern scientific men, who claim that if God answers a prayer, a Law is broken. The possibility of connecting laws with a Divine Power who "thinks them progressively forth," never even occurred to Lucretius. His only conception of Divine action is the polytheistic one of interruption and interference. His attitude here forms a striking contrast to that of the Hebrew race, to whom the regularity of Nature carried with it inevitable proof of the Divine Will suggesting itself in orderly fashion.

A complete atomic theory of the world was constructed for us by the poet in "De Natura." He has completed the necessary foundation to show that the atoms, moving of their own accord,

De Natura, Book II, Lines 1090-1092

(1)--"Nature itself is seen through its own will to cause all things."

(2)--De Natura, Book II, Lines 1090-1104.

have created all existing things, including the soul of Titus Lucretius, and all men destined to be. He admits the existence of Free Will, and says "I cannot account for Free Will in Man unless the atoms from which man comes, have Free Will also." From a materialistic standpoint, it is surprising that Lucretius should admit Free Will at all. (De Rerum Nat. II, L.281-287.)

The poet was forced, however inconsistently, to admit something besides dead matter in the scheme of evolution. Is he not, in a groping, unreasoning way, recognizing the existence of some First Cause? As motion in Man is the result of Will, so only Will could give the first impulse which caused atoms to act.

What was Lucretius' attitude toward death? With all the strength of his sombre eloquence he tries to reconcile men to the thought of eternal death. (1) He uses the term "mors immortalis, mors aeterna." So direct and impetuous is his argument that the faith of many no doubt has wavered and shaken before the torrent of his eloquence. Terrible are the lines in which Lucretius preaches his creed of human annihilation, (2) on the uselessness of prayer, and the fear of those who look on the star-lit heavens. (3) Hopeless atheism is in these lines for one who will listen to Lucretius.

We know that during Lucretius' life all Italy was the scene of bloodshed and slaughter and that priestly superstition painted the future life as unjust and terrible as was the present one. But even so, there must have been something abnormal in him to explain why the human instinct of hope could have been

(1)--De Natura, Book III, Lines 417--829.

(2)--De Natura, Book III, Lines 912--977.

(3)--De Natura, Book V, Lines - 1194--1217.

so destroyed in him. He has no explanation of the normal human sense of something deathless within us, no explanation for the attraction of one soul to another, drawn by beauty of spirit surpassing that of body.

The watchword of the Epicurean was "Securitas," (Freedom from care). This is the Epicurean ideal in its relation, first, to the gods, who have no care of men either to reward or punish them; and second, in relation to man, because the ideal of human happiness is, no anxiety as to this world or an imaginary world to come. The former we find in the inscription "Dis Securis" (To the gods who take no heed). The latter we find in this strange inscription, "Perpetuae securitati--securitati aeterne," (To the everlasting freedom from distress,--that is, to the Eternal Nothingness). (1)

This creed darkened Lucretius' life. There is in his poem no note of hope; his earth and heaven were left empty. He had banished from sky and field, wood and stream the many conscious presences. He had found the world not with One Great Life, but with many lesser lives, and he left it dead and cold. We sense in his poem a missing element,--the lack of Life,--the absence of a Living Presence. Here Lucretius seems to be not true to himself,--he seems stirred by feelings at variance with Epicureanism. His intense feelings break through his Epicurean words and will not be hidden. Repeatedly he designates Epicurus as a god. May not this worship for his Master be construed as an expression of his own religious feeling, only half realized, but striving to break the bonds which kept his soul from expressing its instinctive desires?

Lucretius says repeatedly that the world is the result of chance, yet he draws for us such grand pictures of Nature that

(1) CIL III 5825; Vi, 9280; 10848; X, 6706.)

we can almost hear him say, "See, is not the world more mysterious,--does not its beauty compel our awe and reverence more than anything sprung from mere atoms?"

Lucretius could not share in the glad enthusiasm and loyalty to the law of God embodied in the beautiful "Hymn to Zeus" by the Stoic Cleanthes. "Oh Zeus, thou most glorious of the immortals,----Founder of Nature, who guidest all things according to Law,----without Thee no work is done on earth, nor in the sphere of the Divine Ether, nor in the sea." Cleanthes closes with a prayer for personal goodness and purity of men. Nowhere in Lucretius' poem do we find so lofty an aspiration for personal righteousness. His poem is full of a noble desire to help humanity, but it springs from a lower, material level.

The Epicurean teaching was often weak on the spiritual side. It taught, for example, that the criminal is distressed in mind only because of his fear that he may be found out. The Stoic teaching is here far superior,--for it shows that sin is disloyalty, and the wrongdoer is unhappy because he feels himself a lonely and jarring thing in the Universe.

Lucretius' poem is well done, yet not well done for him because through it he does violence to the consciousness within himself of a Supreme Power. He makes us share his sense of a spiritual element in Nature, even while he stoutly denies any Divine element in the world. If Lucretius had lived in the day of a greater teacher,--if Christ or even Socrates had called him to follow it seems certain that the religious consciousness within him would have come to a fuller realization and expression. He was so entirely loyal to the belief that he supported,--we know that to a higher truth he would have been

faithful even to death. Our modern mind may see in Lucretius' expression of religious feeling some lack, yet we know that a spirit so earnest and a soul so courageous cannot have existed in vain.

Chapter V.

Conclusion.

This closes our account of the experience, in religion and philosophy, of three representative Romans. As a background for this story we have sketched, in briefest outline, the development of religious ideas in Greece. We have seen Rome receive these ideas and graft them upon her own early religion, together with Etruscan and Oriental practices and ideas. The resulting composite religion we have briefly traced down through the period of the Republic, when it became merely a system of hollow formalism, and superstitious ceremonies.We have seen how Greek philosophy came, near the close of the period of the Republis, to breath new life, for a time, into Rome's decadent religion. This philosophy we have seen accepted, at least in part, by Romans of the better intellectual classes.

As three representative Romans we have described the religious experience of Cicero, Vergil, and Lucretius, whose beliefs represented the religious experience of Rome in their generation.

From our study we conclude that each of these three great Romans gave evidence of a deep and natural religious instinct,- each one reflected in his life and writings what he conceived to be the best of the religious ideas current in his day.

In their lives and writings we have seen, too,ideals reflected which were far above the ideals of that day,- ideals which the Roman world had not thought of,- service to their fellow men, especially to the needy and suffering,- ideals of peace and brotherly love. In this sense these three Romans surely may be considered forerunners of Christianity. A generation after them the ideals which they represented were being taught by the apostles of Christianity.

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** indicates that the book has been read carefully, and that fairly complete notes were taken.

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